

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY

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TAGS: SREF, US, CI

SUBJECT: PAROLE OF CHILEAN REFUGEES

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PREPARED STATEMENT USED BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION TESTIMONY BEFORE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE JUNE 12.

2. QUOTE: MR. CHAIRMAN, I WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR BEFORE THIS COMMITTEE TO SPEAK ON THE SUBJECT OF CHILEAN REFUGEES. MY STAFF AND I HAVE BEEN WORKING HARD FOR MANY MONTHS TO OBTAIN APPROVAL OF A PROPOSAL TO PAROLE INTO THE UNITED STATES A LIMITED NUMBER OF CHILEAN REFUGEES AND DETAINEES FROM CHILE AND PERU, PLUS SPOUSES AND DEPENDENTS. SO WHEN THIS HEARING WAS SUDDENLY CALLED I SIMPLY TORE UP MY SCHEDULE FOR TODAY AND CAME ON UP.

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FIRST LET ME REVIEW BRIEFLY THE HISTORY OF THE CHILEAN REFUGEE PROBLEM. THERE HAVE BEEN THREE DISTINCT RESETTLEMENT EFFORTS FOR REFUGEES IN AND FROM CHILE. THE FIRST, IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SEPTEMBER, 1973 OVERTHROW OF THE

ALLENDE GOVERNMENT, INVOLVED THE RESETTLING OF ALMOST 3,600 NON-CHILEAN REFUGEES AND THEIR DEPENDENTS IN 41 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES. THE MAJOR PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES WERE

ARGENTINA, FRANCE, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, WHICH TOOK A TOTAL OF OVER 2,300 OF THESE PEOPLE. NINETEEN WERE PAROLED INTO THE UNITED STATES.

THE SECOND EFFORT INVOLVED CHILEAN REFUGEES IN PERU. WE ESTIMATE THAT UP TO 4,000 CHILEANS FLED TO PERU FOLLOWING THE COUP. THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT ADMITTED THEM IN TRANSIT ONLY AND ASKED THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER TO CONDUCT A RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM. IN 1974 OVER 1,500 WERE RESETTLED IN SOME 15 COUNTRIES, PRINCIPALLY CANADA, NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, LUXEMBURG, HUNGARY AND ROMANIA. THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT ACCEPTED ANY. THERE ARE STILL ABOUT 1,200 IN PERU. ONLY LAST WEEK THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, IN LIMA, CALLED IN AMBASSADORS FROM A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES REPRESENTED IN PERU, ASKING FOR A RENEWED EFFORT TO RESETTLE THESE PEOPLE.

THE THIRD REFUGEE EFFORT INVOLVES DETAINEES IN CHILE. OUR BEST INFORMATION INDICATES THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 4,000 TO 5,000 CHILEANS CURRENTLY IN DETENTION IN CHILE. THEY INCLUDE MEMBERS OF A NUMBER OF POLITICAL PARTIES. SOME OF THEM HAVE BEEN CONVICTED AND OTHERS HAVE NOT. THE GREAT MAJORITY OF SENTENCES WERE PASSED BY MILITARY, NOT CIVILIAN, COURTS. SOME DETAINEES HAVE BEEN HELD WITHOUT CHARGE FOR AS LONG AS 21 MONTHS. THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT ACKNOWLEDGES HAVING DETAINED OVER 41,000 PERSONS AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER SINCE THE COUP. OF THE 36,000 RELEASED, 9,000 HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. IN A SPEECH LAST SEPTEMBER, CHILEAN CHIEF OF STATE PINOCHET OFFERED TO RELEASE AND EXILE DETAINEES WHO COULD BE RESETTLED IN OTHER COUNTRIES. RECENTLY THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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MENT BROADENED THE CRITERIA TO INCLUDE THOSE CHILEANS WHO HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF CRIMES RELATED TO "INTERNAL SECURITY". A CHILEAN COMMISSION HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO RULE WHETHER SENTENCES CAN BE COMMUTED TO ENABLE DEPORTATION OF THESE PEOPLE. SOME HAVE BEEN RELEASED AND WILL BE RESETTLED IN CANADA AND IN MEXICO. THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT OFFERED TO RESETTLE ANY OF THEM.

NOW LET ME SPELL OUT THE REASONS WHY I HAVE BEEN WORKING SO HARD TO OBTAIN AUTHORIZATION TO PERMIT THE RESETTLEMENT OF CHILEAN DETAINEES AND REFUGEES, AND THEIR FAMILIES, IN THE UNITED STATES.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, THERE IS A HUMANITARIAN NEED FOR SUCH ACTION. WE SYMPATHIZE WITH THE PLIGHT OF THE REFUGEES AND DETAINEES AND WE WISH TO DO OUR PART IN THE INTERNATIONAL RESETTLEMENT EFFORT.

SECONDLY, THERE IS STRONG RELIGIOUS SUPPORT IN CHILE FOR SUCH A U.S. EFFORT. FOR EXAMPLE, BOTH FATHER POBLETE, ADVISER TO CARDINAL SILVA OF CHILE, AND BISHOP FRENZ, LUTHERAN LEADER OF CHILE, HAVE REPEATEDLY URGED US TO TAKE THIS ACTION. WE ARRANGED FOR BOTH OF THEM TO MEET WITH STAFF COUNSEL FOR THE SENATE AND HOUSE COMMITTEE.

THIRD, WE HAVE BEEN ASKING THE U.N. HIGH COMMISSIONER OF REFUGEES TO GET OTHER COUNTRIES TO TAKE IN VIETNAMESE REFUGEES. IT IS INCONSISTENT TO SEEK COOPERATION FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AND OTHER COUNTRIES ON THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE PROBLEM IF WE REFUSE TO LIFT A FINGER TO HELP THE CHILEANS. RECENTLY THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN MIGRATION EXPRESSED TO OUR SANTIAGO EMBASSY ITS HOPE FOR RAPID AUTHORIZATION OF THE ENTRY OF CHILEANS INTO THE U.S.

FOURTH, OUR ACCEPTANCE OF CHILEANS WILL DEMONSTRATE THAT OUR CONCERN FOR REFUGEES EXTENDS TO ALL PERSONS IN NEED, REGARDLESS OF THE NATURE AND POLITICAL COLORATION OF THE GOVERNMENT FROM WHICH THEY ARE FLEEING. SUCH ACTION WILL ALSO HELP TO IMPROVE THE U.S. IMAGE IN THE EYES OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN CHILE AND MANY OTHER COUNTRIES.

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FIFTH, THE SECURITY RISK TO US IS MINIMAL. ALL CHILEANS WILL BE CAREFULLY SCREENED, ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS. IT IS NOT PROPOSED TO BRING IN COMMUNISTS, TERRORISTS OR ECONOMIC DISTRESS CASES. IN THE COURSE OF OUR CONSULTATION WITH CONGRESS WE HAVE BEEN TOLD REPEATEDLY THAT IT IS UNDESIRABLE TO BRING IN COMMUNISTS. ALL I CAN DO IS SAY ONCE AGAIN THAT WE DO NOT, REPEAT NOT, INTEND TO BRING IN COMMUNISTS.

SIXTH, SO FAR AS I CAN DISCERN, IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROPOSAL WILL IN NO WAY HELP THE COMMUNIST PARTY. ON THE CONTRARY, I AM CONVINCED THAT REFUSAL TO ACCEPT CHILEAN DETAINEES AND REFUGEES WOULD SERVE COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA PURPOSES.

SEVENTH, THERE IS GREAT DOMESTIC INTEREST IN THIS PROPOSAL. WE HAVE BEEN RECEIVING DAILY CALLS FROM

REPRESENTATIVES OF MANY ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS INCLUDING, FOR EXAMPLE, THE U.S. CATHOLIC CONFERENCE,

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, THE AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE, THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, AND THE LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION. THEY ASK WHY, AFTER ALL THESE MONTHS, WE DO NOT MOVE AHEAD.

NOW, IN CONCLUSION, LET ME REVIEW BRIEFLY THE STEPS WE HAVE TAKEN IN OBTAINING APPROVAL FOR OUR PLAN. FOLLOWING THE SECRETARY'S DECISION, LAST NOVEMBER, TO REQUEST THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO EXERCISE HIS PAROLE AUTHORITY ON BEHALF OF CHILEAN REFUGEES AND DETAINEES, WE BEGAN OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS. BOTH COMMITTEES WERE INFORMED OF THE PROPOSAL IN WRITING ON DECEMBER 16 AND WERE ASKED FOR COMMENTS. WE HAD TWO MEETINGS WITH THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, THE LATEST IN FEBRUARY. IN A LETTER DATED MARCH 25 THE COMMITTEE RECOGNIZED THE HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED AND SAID IT DID NOT OBJECT TO A PAROLE PROGRAM FOR CHILEAN DETAINEES ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS. WE ALSO REQUESTED CONSULTATION WITH THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE. WE MET WITH MR. LOUGHRAN OF YOUR STAFF EARLIER THIS YEAR.

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ON APRIL 23, DEPUTY SECRETARY INGERSOLL WROTE TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL URGING THAT HE UTILIZE HIS AUTHORITY UNDER SECTION 212 (D) (5) OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT TO PAROLE INTO THE UNITED STATES 400 REFUGEES AND DETAINEES, AND THEIR FAMILIES.

ON MAY 29, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY MET WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND GENERAL CHAPMAN. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND GENERAL CHAPMAN INDICATED THEY DID NOT FAVOR A CLASS PAROLE FOR A FIXED NUMBER OF PEOPLE. THEY DID, HOWEVER, OFFER TO CONSIDER CAREFULLY, PURSUANT TO THEIR STANDARD POLICIES, ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS, THOSE CHILEAN REFUGEES AND DETAINEES FAVORABLY RECOMMENDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE. THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FINDS THIS ACCEPTABLE. WE HAVE SINCE WORKED OUT WITH THE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE THE PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE FOR OUR EMBASSIES IN SANTIAGO AND LIMA FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS PROJECT. WE ARE SATISFIED THOSE PLANS ARE SOUND AND REALISTIC, AND WE ARE READY AND EAGER TO GET STARTED.

THANK YOU. END QUOTE.

3. FYI. ROGERS APPEARANCE BEFORE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE CAME IN RESPONSE TO LAST-MINUTE REQUEST BY COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN EASTLAND. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT PREVIOUS DAY HAD INFORMED SENATE AND HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEES OF PLANS TO MOVE AHEAD ON CASE-BY-CASE PAROLE PROPOSAL. SENATORS EASTLAND, BURDICK, HRUSKA, KENNEDY AND ABOUREZK ATTENDED

HEARING. REACTION WAS MIXED. KENNEDY WAS SUPPORTIVE
OF DEPT'S EFFORTS AND TRIED TO COUNTER EASTLAND'S INITIAL
MISGIVING. AT END OF HEARING, EASTLAND APPEARED
SATISFIED WITH WHAT WE ENVISAGED. DEPARTMENT HAS INFORMED
CHILEAN EMBASSY HERE OF CIRCUMSTANCES OF ROGERS TESTIMONY
AND GENERAL OUTLINES OF PAROLE MECHANISM. KISSINGER

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